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SUPERMAN
RETURNS TO



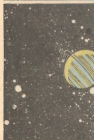
ACTION
COMICS

by **GEORGE
PÉREZ
& BRETT
BREEDING**



**THE MAN
OF STEEL.**

-BACK WHERE HE BELONGS!



A VISTA OF STONE AND STEEL. TOWERING WALLS REVERBERATE WITH THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY.

YET THROUGH THE DEAFENING DIN OF URBAN BUSTLE, A WHISTLING WIND IS HEARD.

IT BLOWS SOFTLY AT FIRST, THEN BUILDS TO A CRESCENDO...



THE UNIQUE SOUND DRAWING ANXIOUS EYES SKYWARD, TOWARDS ITS SOURCE...



MOMMY, LOOK! UP IN THE SKY!

IT'S A BIG, BLUE BIRD!



NO, SWEETHEART, IT'S ONLY A PLANE.



WAIT! IT'S HIM!



HE'S COME BACK!



"IT'S
SUPERMAN!"

THE RUSHING OF THE WIND DIES AS SUDDENLY
AS IT BEGAN, FADING AGAINST THE MAJESTIC
RUSTLING OF HIS BRIGHT CRIMSON CLOAK.

AS THE GOLDEN SUN SHINES UPON HIS
STRONG, NOBLE FACE, EYES WHICH
HAVE WITNESSED THE BIRTH OF GUNS
PEER GRATEFULLY AT THE SIMPLE,
FAMILIAR CITYSCAPE BELOW.

HIS MASSIVE CHEST
SWELLS WITH JOY.

THE MAN OF STEEL
IS HOME.

SUPERMAN ON EARTH

GEORGE PEREZ * BRETT BREEDING
STORY & BREAKDOWN * FINISHED ART

BILL OAKLEY ~ LETTERER * GLENN WHITMORE ~ COLORIST
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~ SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER ~

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THAT AIR. I
WAS BEGINNING
TO THINK I'D
NEVER BREATHE
IT AGAIN.

IT MAY BE A
BIT POLLUTED -- LIKE
ANY BIG CITY'S -- BUT
RIGHT NOW IT SMELLS
AS SWEET TO ME AS
A WHOLE FIELD OF
ROSES.

AND THE SOUNDS!
GOD, I HAD ALMOST
FORGOTTEN HOW
METROPOLIS
SOUNDED.

SO MUCH
ACTIVITY. SO MUCH
LIFE.

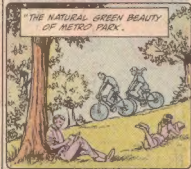
SO MUCH
TO SEE.



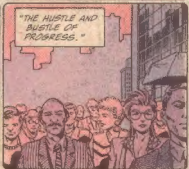
"KIDS."



"EVERYDAY, PEOPLE."



"THE NATURAL GREEN BEAUTY
OF METRO PARK."



"THE HUSTLE AND
BUSTLE OF
PROGRESS."

SOAK IT
ALL IN, CLARK.
OL' BUDDY...

BECAUSE THIS
IS WHERE YOU
DEFINITELY BELONG.



I STILL FEEL VERY DIFFERENT NOW, THOUGH. I'VE LEARNED SO MUCH ABOUT MYSELF SINCE I'VE BEEN AWAY.

AT LEAST BACK HERE I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET SOME HELP IN SORTING SOME OF IT OUT.



BETTER CHECK HOW MY SOUVENIR'S HOLDING UP.



HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO EXAMINE IT SINCE I RE-ENTERED THIS SOLAR SYSTEM.

MAN, THAT SUN SURE FELT--

WELCOME BACK, SUPERMAN!!

HUH?!

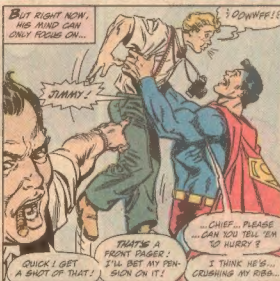


PERFECT! THAT SHOT'S A FRONT PAGER!

OOE, SUPERMAN, IT SURE IS GREAT SEEING YOU AGAIN!

THE MAN OF STEEL CAN SEE IT IN THEIR EYES AND HEAR IT IN THEIR VOICES.

QUESTIONS. SO MANY QUESTIONS.



BUT RIGHT NOW, HIS MIND CAN ONLY FOCUS ON...

DOWNFEE!

JIMMY!

QUICK I GET A SHOT OF THAT!

THAT'S A FRONT PAGER! I'LL BET MY PENSION ON IT!

...CHIEF... PLEASE ...CAN YOU TELL 'EM TO HURRY?

I THINK HE'S... CRUSHING MY RIBS...



I'M SORRY, JIMMY. I GUESS I JUST GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY.

DON'T WORRY, SUPERMAN. THE KID'S YOUNG. HE'LL RECOVER.



A LITTLE LATER, MR. WHITE. I PROMISE. LET'S JUST SAY THAT I'M GLAD TO BE BACK.

BY THE WAY... WHERE'S LOIS? AND CLARK?

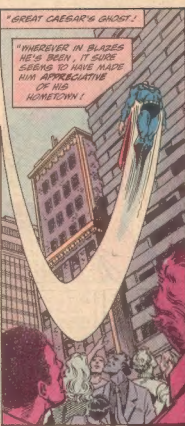
MISS LANE'S OUT AT PROFESSOR HAMILTON'S LAB...



AND MR. KENT... HE'S... UH... OUT... RIGHT NOW...



OH, WELL,
I'LL SEE THEM
BOTH LATER
THEN.



"GREAT CAESAR'S HOST!"

"WHEREVER IN BLAZES
HE'S BEEN, IT SURE
SEEMS TO HAVE MADE
HIM APPRECIATIVE
OF HIS
HOMETOWN!"



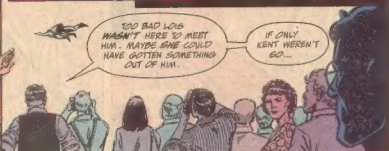
"LOOK AT THAT FELLOW
GOAR! IT'S ALMOST AS
IF HE WERE DRUNK."

"ARE YOU GETTING
ALL THIS, JIM?"

"FINE, FINE."

"YES, SIR, CHIEF.
I'M ALREADY ON
MY SECOND
ROLL OF FILM."

"AND DON'T
CALL ME
'CHIEF'."





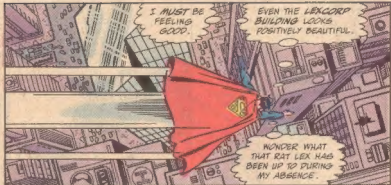
I KNEW IT! GET BACK INSIDE, YOU TWO! OLSEN--

-- GET SUPERMAN BACK HERE WITH THAT SIGNAL WATCH OF YOURS!

SUPERMAN...

UH... SINCE HE'S BEEN GONE, CHIEF, I HAVEN'T BEEN WEARING IT! IT'S IN MY DESK.

WELL, GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST, MAN-- SO GET IT!



I MUST BE FEELING GOOD.

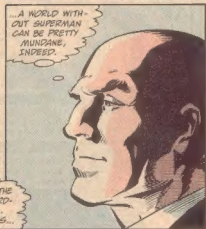
EVEN THE LEXCORP BUILDING LOOKS POSITIVELY BEAUTIFUL.

WONDER WHAT THAT RAT LEX HAS BEEN UP TO DURING MY ABSENCE.



SO, BRAINIAC WAS RIGHT. THE FLYING FOOL HAS RETURNED.

STRANGE. I MUST ADMIT, I'M ALMOST GLAD.



...A WORLD WITHOUT SUPERMAN CAN BE PRETTY MUNDANE, INDEED.

DESPITE ALL THE STRIFE... REGARDLESS OF THE... INCONVENIENCES...



AND FINALLY, AFTER TOO SHORT A TIME, THE JUBILANT MAN OF STEEL CAREENS TOWARD HIS FINAL DESTINATION...

...AN INVITING WINDOW...

...A FAMILIAR, SPARKLING FACADE...

AND INSIDE...



GOD, NOW I KNOW HOW DOROTHY FELT.

FUNNY, THERE'S SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THE APARTMENT. CAN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT.



OH, C'MON, CLARK. YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS. IT'S BEEN MONTHS SINCE YOU'VE BEEN HERE.

YOU'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHT NOW.



LIKE THIS.

OKAY, THE OLD CLERIC'S RAIMENT SEEMS TO HAVE PROTECTED IT FROM MY IMPROMPTU AERIAL CIRCUS.

I JUST HOPE THAT HIS FAITH IN ME WILL BE JUSTIFIED.

I HOPE I'LL BE ABLE TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE ERADICATOR.

...MY ONLY LEGACY TO KRYPTON.

ERADICATOR... THAT'S WHAT THE OLD CLERIC CALLED IT.

"ACCORDING TO HIM, WHILE IT WAS CREATED PRIMARILY AS A WEAPON, IT DEVELOPED INTO SOMETHING... ELSE.

"EVEN HE DIDN'T SEEM TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT.

"ALL I KNOW IS THAT HE SAID I WAS THE ANSWER TO HIS CENTURIES-OLD PRAYER. AND THAT THE RELIC HAD FINALLY BEEN RETURNED TO THE BLOODLINE FROM WHICH IT WAS STOLEN."

HE HAD ALL BUT GIVEN UP HOPE. KRYPTON WAS DEAD. THEY WERE ALL DEAD.

EXCEPT FOR ME.

HE BELIEVED IT WAS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE ERADICATOR RESEMBLED THE MATRIX ROD THAT BROUGHT ME TO EARTH.

I WAS PRE-DESTINED TO RETRIEVE IT, AND SOLVE ITS MYSTERY.

BUT, WILL THE KNOWLEDGE MY KRYPTONIAN FATHER BEQUEATHED ME BE ENOUGH?

MAYBE I SHOULD CALL PROFESSOR HAMILTON...

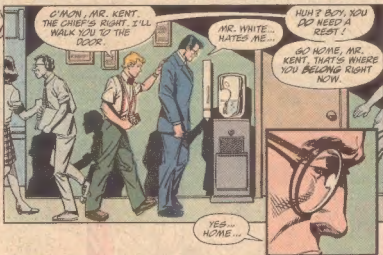
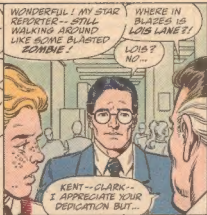
WELL, WE'LL SEE. FIRST THINGS FIRST.

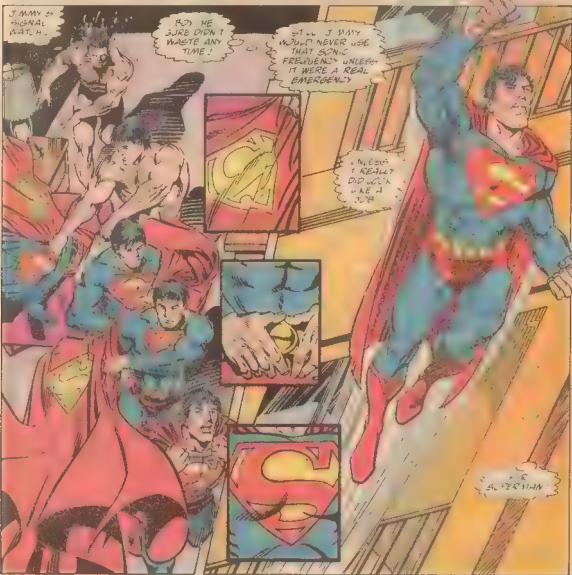
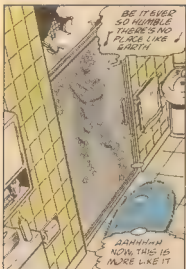
A NICE HOT SHOWER A VISIT WITH MY FOLKS.

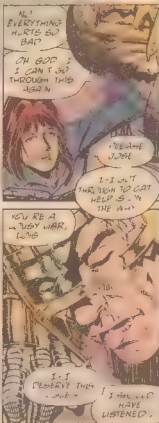
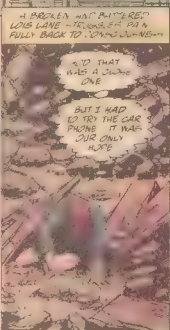
THEN CLARK KENT, INTERVIEW REPORTER, BETTER GET BACK TO WORK.

HAH. WONDER WHY JIMMY SOUNDED SO GOMBER WHEN I MENTIONED CLARK'S NAME?

SO MANY QUESTIONS...









THE UNMISTAKABLE
RUMBLINGS OF RAW
DEVASTATION-- OF
UNBRIDLED TERROR--

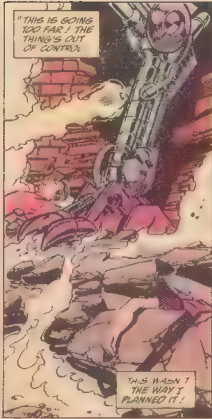
--EVEN FROM A QUARTER
MILE UNDERGROUND
LOIS CAN RECOGNIZE IT.

METROPOLIS HARBOR,
A PIER UNDER SIEGE

FRANTIC MASSES
SCAMPERING TO ESCAPE
THE APOCALYPTIC DELUGE--



--THE POUNDING
B. RAIN-- TORRENTS
OF DEATH!



"THIS IS GOING
TAD FAR! THE
THING'S OUT
OF CONTROL

THIS WASN'T
THE WAY I
PLANNED IT!



"NO PANIC!
NOT THE WATER
TOWER

THAT'S
MY
REASON



BLAST YOU, DARKSEID!
WHY WON'T THAT MONSTER
RESPOND TO MY COMMANDS?!

CEASE YOUR
CONFOUNDED
WHINING,
EEL

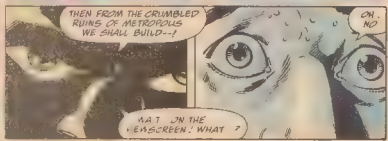


YOU WANTED A
VEHICLE OF PURE
DESTRUCTION...
YOU WANTED
TURMOIL!

AM I TO BLAME
BECAUSE YOU
DON'T HAVE THE
COMPETENCE TO
CONTROL IT?

BUT, THERE'S NOT
GOING TO BE ANY-
THING LEFT!

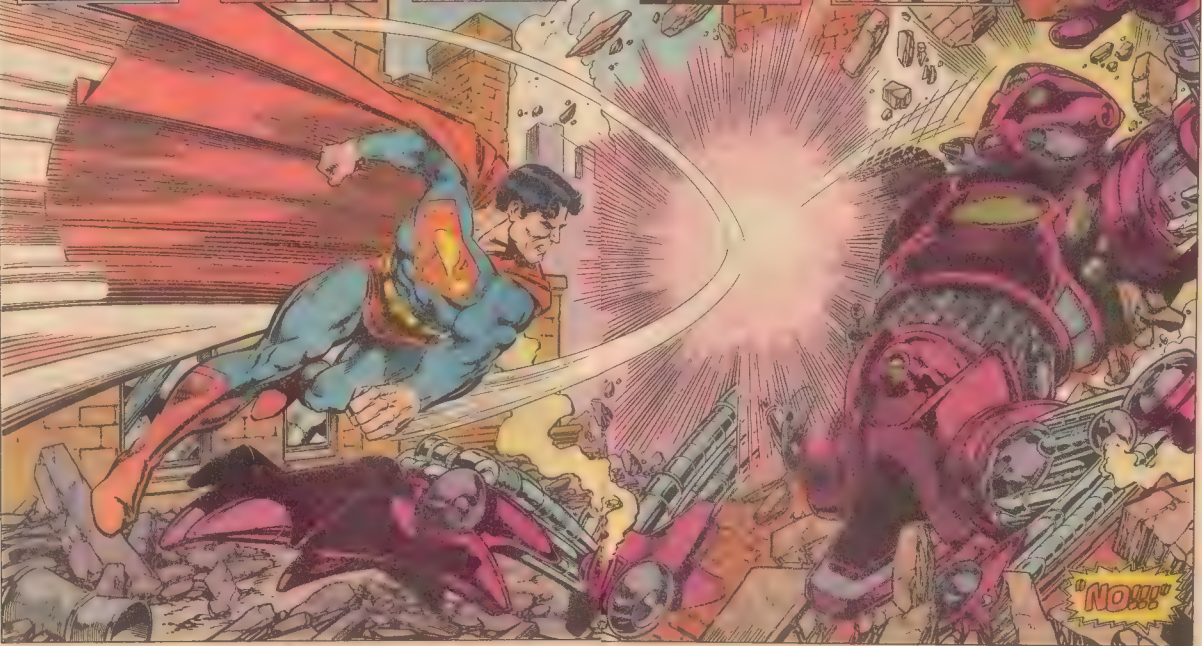
IT'S DESTROYING
EVERYTHING!

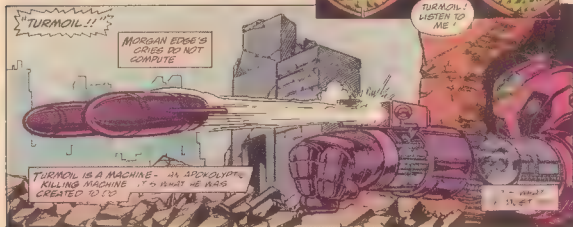
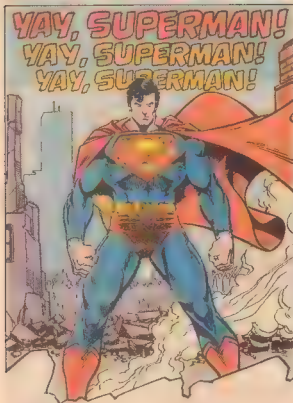
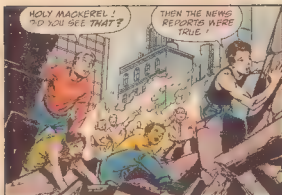


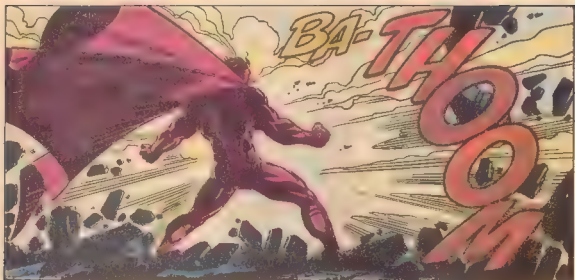
THEN FROM THE CRUMBLING
RUINS OF METROPOLIS
WE SHALL BUILD--!

OH,
NO

AAT ON THE
SCREEN! WHAT?







!WHEN I NOT
BAD THOUGH
I'VE CERTAINLY
FACED A LOT
WORSE

EVEN SO
CLARK O' BOY
- THERE'S
NO NEED I?
JUST STAND
HERE AND TAKE
THIS ABUSE

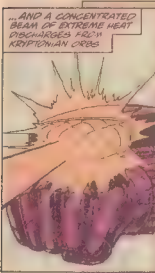


MY X-RAY VISION'S
ESTABLISHED THAT THE
THING'S NOT HUMAN



SO I HAVE NO
QUALMS ABOUT
DOING THIS.

STEEL-BLUE EYES
REDDEN WITH FIRE...



...AND A CONCENTRATED
BEAM OF EXTREME HEAT
DISCHARGES FROM
KRYPTONIAN ORBS



NOW EEE!
THIS IS
GREAT!

THIS IS
ABSOLUTELY
AWESOME!



I TOLD YA, CAT--
FOLLOWING SUPER-
MAN THIS WAY GETS
US THE BEST SEAT
IN TOWN!

WAS
TIMMY, BUT
NOT TOO CLOSE
DUDE?

I'M NOT
LOIS! I DON'T
LIKE BEING IN
THE LINE OF
FIRE!

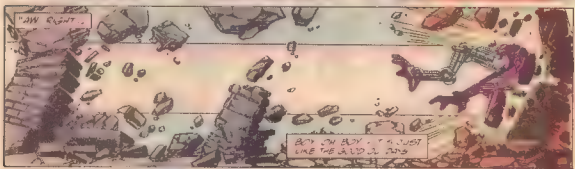


'DON'T WORRY, CAT.
ELDON'S THE BEST
CHOPPER PILOT IN
TOWN!

JUST RAN IN THE FLAT
BY FLAY AND I'LL TAKE
CARE OF THE PHOTOS!

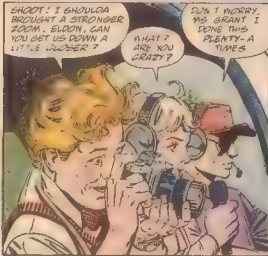


YOU GOT
A GUN? I
THAT LEFT
JAM! GO
SUPERMAN!



"AW RIGHT..

BOY OH BOY... I'VE JUST
LIKE THE GULL L DING



SHOOT! I SHOULD
BROUGHT A STRONGER
ZOOM, ELDON, CAN
YOU GET US DOWN A
LITTLE CLOSER?

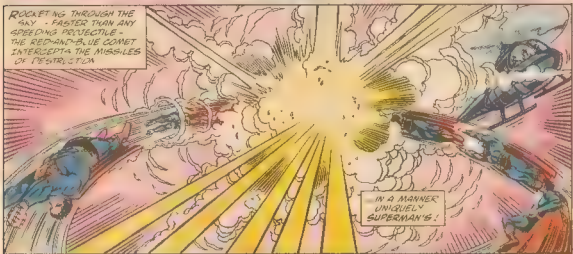
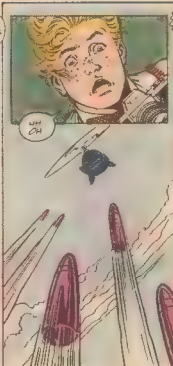
WHAT?
ARE YOU
CRAZY?

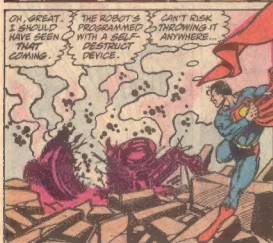
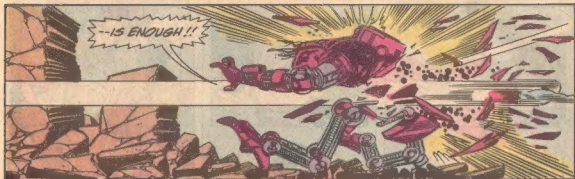
DON'T WORRY,
MS GRANT I
DONE THIS
PLENTY-A
TIMES



ELDON YOU'RE NOT THE
ONE I'M WORRIED ABOUT

"I JUST DON'T THINK
THAT THING... AS
THERE IS... JUST... A
FRESH KID..."





--IS ENOUGH!!

OH, GREAT. I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THAT COMING.

THE ROBOT'S PROGRAMMED WITH A SELF-DESTRUCT DEVICE.

CAN'T RISK THROWING IT ANYWHERE...

WELL, THE OLD CLERIC LED ME TO BELIEVE THIS NEW CAPE WOULD STAND UP TO JUST ABOUT ANYTHING...

THHMMFF!

...AND, BLESS HIS LITTLE GREEN HEART-- HE WAS RIGHT!

I'VE LOST CONTACT!

SUPERMAN'S DESTROYED TURMOIL!

AND DARKSEID-- THAT MISERABLE, BACK-STABBING WRETCH-- HE'S LEFT ME OUT IN THE COLD.

TAKE IT EASY, MORGAN... STAY CALM... REMEMBER WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID.

THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY OUT OF THIS!

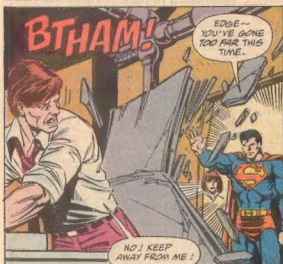
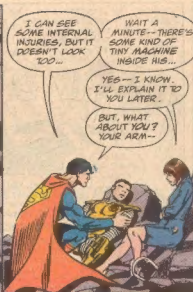
LOIS! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SUPERMAN! BOY, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! BUT HOW DID YOU FIND US?

CAT LEFT HER PHONE LINE OPEN WHEN SHE REALIZED YOUR CAR PHONE WAS STILL OFF THE HOOK. I JUST USED IT AS A HOMING SIGNAL.

HOW'S GANGBUSTER?

NOT GOOD. HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS.





GOOD EVENING, METROPOLIS. WELL, THE BIG NEWS, AS IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW, IS THAT SUPERMAN, THE WORLD FAMOUS MAN OF STEEL, IS FINALLY BACK HOME.

AND HE COULDN'T HAVE TIMED HIS COMEBACK ANY BETTER. WITHIN HOURS OF HIS RETURN, SUPERMAN HALTED THE MURDEROUS RAMPAGE OF A MYSTERIOUS KILLER ROBOT.

MUCH OF THE EDGEWATER DISTRICT HAS BEEN DESTROYED AND THE DAMAGE IN LIVES AND PROPERTY WILL TAKE DAYS TO ASSESS.

BUT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FAR WORSE-- IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR SUPERMAN.

SO, THERE WAS NO HOMECOMING REVELRY FOR THE MAN OF TOMORROW. NO FANFARE. JUST A JOB THAT NEEDED TO BE DONE.

I ONCE ASKED HIM WHY HE DID IT, AND THE ANSWER WAS PURE SUPERMAN. "FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY."

TO SOME OF THE MORE JADED AMONG US, HE MIGHT SOUND CORNY, BUT SUPERMAN -- IF YOU'RE LISTENING...

WE WOULDN'T HAVE YOU ANY OTHER WAY.



THIS IS CATHERINE GRANT. GOOD NIGHT.



MAN, WHAT A DAY! IT'LL BE GOOD TO JUST LIE DOWN AND...



EH? MY DOOR'S OPEN?!

GREAT SCOTT!



WHAT KIND OF EXPLOSION WAS THAT? IT WAS ALMOST DEAD SILENT!

WHAT ON EARTH COULD...



GREAT KRYPTON...



DON'T MISS SUPERMAN #34